

REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8 – 13 are currently pending. In the Office Action of September 23, all rejections based on PCT application WO 01/72284 to Schwarz were withdrawn. In lieu of WO '284, the Examiner now cites U.S. Patent No. 6,740,341 to Holt et al. ("Holt"). The Examiner contends that Holt's disclosure alone would have suggested the subject matter of Claims 1 – 6 and 9 – 12 to a person of ordinary skill. However, dependent Claims 7, 8, and 13 were not rejected on any art or other basis. These claims were only objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. From this, Applicants reasonably conclude that the subject matter of Claims 7, 8, and 13 is deemed to patentably distinguish over the cited art.

Accordingly, Applicants have amended the claims so that the limitations of Claim 7 are now incorporated into independent Claims 1, 2, and 9. Claims 6 and 7 are cancelled, without prejudice. The dependency of Claim 8 is changed from Claim 7 to Claim 1. These amendments should make the subject matter of Claims 1, 2, and 9 allowable, as well as all their remaining dependents.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned amendments to the claims, Applicants do not concede that Holt or any other cited reference, alone or in combination, disclose or suggests any of their claims as originally presented or as amended during prosecution of this application. Further, Applicants expressly reserve their right to further prosecute claims of any scope consistent with the original disclosure in one or more continuation or other applications.

In light of the above, entry of the foregoing amendments and allowance of Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, and 8 – 13 is respectfully solicited.

In the event this response is not timely filed, Applicants hereby petition for the appropriate extension of time and request that the fee for the extension along with any other fees which may be due with respect to this paper be charged to our Deposit Account No. 12-2355.

Respectfully submitted,

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Application No. 10/688,551
December 22, 2008

Date: December 22, 2008
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